

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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ERDA-07 OMB-01 SIL-01 LAB-04 HEW-06 /165 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4940

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 70

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 SUVA 450/1

MONTREAL FOR ICAO PARIS FOR UNESCO ROME FOR FODAG

VIENNA FOR IAEA VIENNA FOR UNIDO

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TAGS: UNDP EAID

SUBJ: CERP 0008 - UNDP: EVALUATION OF US ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: A. STATE 072386 B. SUVA 034 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN FIJI HAVE SUFFERED FROM A LACK OF DIRECTION AND COORDINATION IN THE PAST YEAR DUE TO A NUMBER OF FRUSTRATING CIRCUMSTANCES. THE LOCATION OF UNDP HEADQUARTERS IN MANILA FOR ITS SOUTH PACIFIC PROGRAM CONTRIBUTED TO A LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY, AND ITS REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE, WHO HAS SINCE RESIGNED, WAS ILL SUITED TO THE TASK OF ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO WORK TOGETHER, OR WITH THEM.

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RELOCATION OF OFFICE IN SUVA, TO BE COMPLETED SHORTLY AND

NAMING OF NEW REGIONAL REP MAY SOLVE SOME OF THESE DIFFICULTIES. DUE TO THIS LACK OF LEADERSHIP VARIOUS UN PROGRAMS IN FIJI HAVE GONE THEIR SEPARATE DIRECTIONS WITHOUT A CENTRAL FOCUS AND IN APPARENT DISARRAY. MOREOVER FINANCIAL CUTBACKS EXPERIENCED BY UNDP HAS RESULTED IN UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR SEVERAL UNDP REGIONAL PROJECTS THAT HAVE HIGH IMPACT ON FIJI--TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PLANT DISEASE CONTROL--AND THERE HAVE BEEN COMPLAINTS FROM REGIONAL GOVTS THAT SUCH CUTS WERE MADE WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION. IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT YEAR FOR UN IN FIJI AND WE CAN ONLY HOPE FOR IMPROVED SITUATION IN MONTHS AHEAD. END SUMMARY.

2. NUMBER OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS HAVE REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS IN FIJI. THESE INCLUDE ILO, WHO, UNDAT, AND SOON UNDP. ALTHOUGH UNDP IS TASKED WITH COORDINATING DEVELOPING AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FIJI AS IT HAS DONE VERY WELL (REF B) THE FACT THAT IT HAS BEEN HEADQUARTERED FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN MANILA HAS RESULTED IN DIFFICULTIES IN FULFILLING ITS COORDINATING ROLE WITH OTHER US AGENCIES AND WITH HOST GOVTS IN REGION. PROBLEM EXACERBATED BY UNCERTAIN LEADERSHIP OF HANS MARTIN SCHMID, INTELLIGENT HARD- WORKING ADMINISTRATOR WHO HAD DIFFICULTIES ESTABLISHING RAPPORT WITH COLLEAGUES AND CONSEQUENTLY WAS LESS THAN SUCCESSFUL IN GIVING DIRECTION TO OVERALL UN EFFORT. TASK OF RELOCATING UNDP OFFICE TO SUVA REMAINED INCOMPLETED AT TIME OF HIS RESIGNATION IN APRIL 1976. DISTURBING INDICATION OF HIS FAILURE TO BRING UN OFFICES AND PROGRAMS TOGETHER IN SUVA (IN BOTH PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL SENSE) IS FACT THAT NONE OF THE PREVIOUSLY SITUATED UN AGENCIES IN SUVA WAS WILLING TO SHARE OFFICE SPACE WITH UNDP, DESPITE HIS EFFORTS TO BRING THEM ALL TOGETHER UNDER COMMON ROOF. PHYSICAL SEPARATENESS DOES NOT ALWAYS INDICATE LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY BUT IN THIS CASE IT DOES. THERE IS DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT UNDP IN SUVA DOES NOT FULFILL ROLE OF COORDINATOR AS IT SHOULD. NEWLY DESIGNATED REGIONAL REF, GARTH AP REES, DUE TO ARRIVE IN SEVERAL MONTHS TO ASSUME POSITION HAS SOME FENCES TO MEND.

3. LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY AMONG UN ASSISTANCE AGENCIES IN FIJI HAS HAD A DELETERIOUS EFFECT AS WELL ON UNDP RELATIONS WITH HOST GOVTS IN REGION. AT RECENT AID SEMINAR CONVENED BY SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SPEC) SECRETARY-GENERAL

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TARIAT OF INDEPENDENT AND SELF GOVERNING PACIFIC ISLANDS STATES SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM, THERE WAS SOME CRITICISM OVER LACK OF COORDINATION AND FOCUS OF MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE. AT CONFERENCE UNDP WAS NOT REPRESENTED BY REGIONAL REP OR HIS DEPUTY, BUT BY FAO REP IN SUVA, A THOROUGHLY COMPETENT INDIVIDUAL BUT HARDLY PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF UN AGENCIES. AT RECENT ESCAP SESSION IN BANGKOK, SPEC DIRECTOR CRITICIZED ESCAP S RELATIVE NEGLECT OF NEEDS OF PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND CUTBACK, WITHOUT

PRIOR CONSULTATION, OF UNDP FUNDS FOR ONLY TWO REGIONAL PROJECTS FUNDED FROM UNDP REGIONAL ALLOCATION IN PACIFIC. PROJECTS INVOLVED TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PLANT DISEASE SURVEY--BOTH PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR PACIFIC.

4. ONE UN OFFICE IN SUVA--UN DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY TEAM (UNDAT) CONSISTING OF FOUR PROFESSIONALS-- HAD TO APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM REGIONAL GOVTS EARLY IN 1976 WHEN FACED WITH CLOSURE DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS. THERE WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN ISSUE A PERSONAL DESIRE BY SCHMID TO SEE THIS OFFICE CLOSED AND HAVE UNDAT PERSONNEL ABSORBED BY UNDP. EVENTUALLY UNDAT DID RECEIVE FUNDS TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS AT LEAST INTO 1977, SO IT WILL REMAIN IN OPERATION AS SEPARATE ENTITY BUT THE PREEXISTING GULF IN UNDP-UNDAT RELATIONS HAS BEEN WIDENED EVEN FURTHER BY THIS EPISODE.

5. EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN FIJI IS COORDINATED THROUGH CENOOTRAL PLANNING OFFICE WHICH ACTS AS SECRETARIAT FOR GOVTS DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PLANS AN ACTIVE ROLE IN PLANNING AND UN REPRESENTATIVES ARE ENCOURAGED TO WORK ACTIVELY WITH HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS AND BILATERAL AID DONORS IN COORDINATING ASSISTANCE.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4942

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AMEMBASSY ROME

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USUN NEW YORK 71

UNCLAS FINAL SECTION OF 2 SUVA 450/2

MONTREAL FOR ICAO, PARIS FOR UNESCO, ROME FOR FODAG,
VIENNA FOR IAEA, VIENNA FOR UNIDO

6. UNDP FIVE YEAR (1976-1980) PROGRAM FOR FIJI WAS DESCRIBED IN REF B. APART FROM FIJI COMPONENT IN REGIONAL UNDP PROJECTS (PARA 3 ABOVE) THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE IMPACT IP FIJI AS RESULT OF UNDP FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS. SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS ENDED IN 1975--UNESCO CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT BASE IN SUVA, A ROOT CROP INVESTIGATION, AND AQUACULTURE SURVEY IN RAVIRAVI. CONTINUING PROJECTS ARE HELATIVELY UNAFFECTED AND NEW PROJECTS ARE SLOW TO START. HISTORICALLY RECRUITMENT OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS HAS BEEN PROBLEM HERE AND IN WREVIUO FIVE YEAR PLAN ACTUAL EXPENDITURES IN FIRST YEAR FELL SHORT OF ALLOCATIONS AND BEGINNING OF THIS PLAN PERIOD SEEMS TO BE NO DIFFERENT.

7. COUNTRY PROGRAMMING WAS COVERED IN REF B. THERE IS THEO-
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RETICALLY CONTINUOUS REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF ONGOING PROJECTS BY CENTRAL PLANNING OFFICE AND IN PRACTICE THIS IS ACCOMPLISHED BUT EMBASSY KNOWS OF NO PROJECT THAT HAS BEEN RADICALLY ALTERED ON TERMINATED EARLY DUE TO NEGATIVE EVALUATION.

8. AS STATED IN REF O, THE EMBASSY HAS NOT PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN REVIEWING PROPOSED PROJECTS UNDER UNDP AUSPICES PRIOR TO THEIR INCLUSION IN COUNTRY PROGRAM. LOCATION OF UNDP OPERATIONS IN MANILA AND TRANSITIONAL NATURE OF LEADERSHIP HAS PREVENTED CLOSE CONTACT BETWEEN OFFICES BUT SITUATION SHOULD MARKEDLY IMPROVE WITH RELOCATION OF UNDP IN SUVA AND WE HOPE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH NEW REGIONAL REP IN FUTURE.

9. UNDP HAS NOT EMPHASIZED ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA AND NO SPECIAL RESOURCES HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED TO ENHANCING WOMEN'S ROLES IN DEVELOPMENT. NEW WHO FUNDED MIDWIFERY COURSE IS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS IN SUVA BUT THIS SEEMS TO HAVE LITTLE RELEVANCE WITH INTENTION OF UN TO PROMOTE EQUAL VOICE AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN HITHERTO MALE-ONLY ENDEAVORS.

20. FINAL COMMENT ON UNDP PRESENCE IN FIJI AND SOUTH PACIFIC MUST BE HTLD IN ABEYANCE UNTIL WE CAN EVALUATE CHANGES EXPECTED IN NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS WITH RELOCATION OF REGIONAL OFFICE IN SUVA AND ARRIVAL OF NEW REGIONAL REP. PAST YEAR HAS BEEN TRYING ONE BUT IN ALL FAIRNESS IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS AND PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THOSE PROJECTS HAVE HAD A POSITIVE

INFLUENCE AND HAVE MADE SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT IN FIJI. FIJI GOVT WELCOMES CONTINUED AND EXPANDED UN ASSISTANCE AND PROBLEMS THAT HAVE EXISTED HAVE NOT DISTURBED THIS BASIC POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON UN OPERATIONS IN FIJI.
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